## ALICE of OLD VINCENNES

By MAURICE THOMPSON

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(Continued.)

CHAPTER XIL.

A RAPIER THRUST. EVERLEY'S absence was not noticed by Hamilton until late on the following day, and even gestion that the young man was possibly carrying out his threat to disregard his parole.

"He would be quite justified in doing it. You know that very well," said Helm, with a laugh, "And he's just the | about something that you never have man to undertake what is impossible. Of course be'll get scalped for his trouble, and that will cost you something. I'm happy to say."

"It is a matter of small importance," Hamilton replied, "but I'll wager you the next toddy that he's not at the present moment a half mile from this spot. He may be a fool-I readily grant that he is-but even a fool is not going to set out alone in this kind of weather to go to where your rebel friends are probably toasting their shins by the fire of green logs and half starving over fonder on the Mississippi."

"Joking aside, you are doubtless right. Beverley is hot headed, and if he could he'd get even with you quick enough, but he hasn't left Vincennes. I think, Miss Reussillon would keep him here if the place were on fire."

Hamilton laughed dryly. He had thought just what Helm was saying. Beverley's attention to Alice had not escaped his notice.

"Speaking of that girl," he remarked after a moment's silence, "what am I to do with her? There's no place to keep her, and Farnsworth insists that she wasn't to blame." He chuckled again and added:

with her too. Seems to be glad she shot him. Says he's ashamed of himself for ever suspecting her of anything but being a genuine angel. Why, he's got as flabby as a rabbit and mumbles like a fool."

"Same as you or I at his age," said Helm, taking a chew of tobacco. "She is a pretty thing. Beverley doesn't know his foot from his shoulder blade when she's anywhere near him. Boys are boys. I'm a sort of boy myself."

"If she'd give up that flag I'd let her go," said Hamilton. "I hate to confine her. It looks brutal and makes me feel like a tyrant."

"Have you ever happened to notice the obvious fact, Governor Hamilton, | that Alice Roussillon and Father Beret are not all the French in Vincennes?" "What do you mean?"

"I mean that I don't for a moment believe that either the girl or the priest knows a thing about where that flag is. Fou silly Jean? I didn't want this They are both as truthful and honorable as people ever get to be. I know omebody else got that flag from under the priest's floor. You may depend upon that. If Miss Roussillon knew where it is she'd say so and then dare you to make her tell where it's

"Oh, the whole town is rotten with treason! That's very clear. There's not a loyal soul in it outside of my forces."

"Thank you for not including me among the loyalists."

"Humph! I spoke of these French people. They pretend to be true, but I believe they are all traitors."

"You can manage them if you try. A little jolly kindness goes a long way with 'em. I had no trouble while I held the town."

Hamilton bit his lip and was silent. Helm was exasperatingly good tempered, and his jocularity was irresistfble. While he was yet speaking a guard came up, followed by Jean, the hunchback, and, saluting, said to Ham-

"The lad wants to see the young lady,

Hamilton gazed quizzically at Jean, who planted himself in his habitual attitude before him and stared up into his face with the grotesque expression which seems to be characteristic of hunchbacks and unfledged birds-the look of an embodied and hideous joke. "Well, sir, what will you have?" the

governor demanded. "I want to see Alice, if you please."

"What for?"

"I want to give her a book to read." "Ah, indeed. Where is it? Let me

see it." Jean took from the breast of his loose jerkin a small volume, dog eared and mildewed, and handed it to Hamilton. Meantime he stood first on one foot, then on the other, gnawing his thumb nail and blinking rapidly.

"Well, Helm, just look here!"

"What?"

"Haven't you ever read it?" "Read what?"

"This novel." "Never read a novel in my life; never

expect to." Hamilton laughed freely at Helm's expense, then turned to Jean and gave

him back the book. It would have been quite military had he taken the precaution to examine between the pages for something hid-

den there, but he did not. "Go give it to her," he said, "and tell admiration of her taste in literature." her I send by compliments, with great

He motloned the soldier to snow acra to Alice. "It's a French story." be added, addressing Heim, "enough to make a pirate blush. That's the sort of girl Mile. Roussillon is:"

"I don't care what kind of a book she rends," blurted Helm. "She's a then he scouted Helm's sug- fine, pure, good girl. Everybody likes her. She's the good angel of this miserable frog hole of a town. You'd like her yourself if you'd straighten up and quit burning tow in your brain all the time. You're always so furious a chance to be just to yourself or pleasant to unybody else."

"If I had got furious at you every time there was overwhelming provocation for it." Hamilton said, "you'd have been long since hanged or shot. I fancy that I have shown angelic forbearance. I've given you somewhat more than a prisoner's freedom."

"So you have, so you have," assented Helm. "I've often been surprised at your generous partiality in my case, Let's have some hot water with something else in it. What do you say? I won't give you any more advice for five minutes by your watch."

"But I want some advice at once." "What about?"

"That girl."

"Turn her loose. That's easy and reputable." Till have to, I presume, but she

ought to be punished." "If you'll think less about punish-

ment, revenge and getting even with everybody and everything you'll som begin to prosper." Hamilton w need, but smiled as on-

quite sure of himself.

Jean followed the soldier to a rickety log pen on the farther side of the stockade, where he found the prisoner "It's true as gospel. He's in love restlessly moving about like a bird in a rustic cage. It had no comforts, that gloomy little room. There was no fireplace, the roof leaked, and the only furniture consisted of a bench to sit on and a pile of skins for a bed. Alice looked charmingly forlorn peeping out of the wraps in which she was bundled against the cold, her hair fluffed and rimpled in shining disorder around her

> The guard let Jean in and closed the door, himself staying outside,

Alice was as glad to see the poor lad as if they had been parted for a year. She hugged him and kissed his drawn little face.

"You dear, good Jean!" she murmured. "You did not forget me." "I brought you something," he wids

Alice santched it, looked at it and then at Jenn.

pered, producing the book.

"Why, what did you bring this for

don't like this book at all. It's hateful I despise it. Take it back."

There's something in it for you, a paper with writing on it. Lieutenant Beverley wrote it on there. It's shut up between the leaves about the mid-

"Sh-s-sh! Not so loud. The guard 'H hear you," Alice b cuth easy willspered. her whole manner changing instantly. She was trembling, and the color had been whisked from her face as the flame from a candle in a sudden draft.

She found the note and read it a fozen times without a pause, her eyes leaping along the lines back and forth with pathetic eagerness and concentration. Presently she sat down on the bench and covered her face with her hands. A tremor first, then a convulsive sobbing shook her collapsed form. Jean regarded her with a drolly sympathetic grimace, elevating his long chin and letting his head settle back between his shoulders.

"Oh, Jean, Jean!" she cried at last, looking up and reaching out her arms. "Oh. Jean, he is gone, gone, gone," Jean stepped closer to her while she

sobbed again like a little child. She pulled him to her and held him rightly against her breast while she once more read the note through blinding tears. The words were few, but to her they bore the message of desolation and despair. A great haunting, hollow voice in her heart repeated them until they echoed from vague dis-

tance to distance. It was written with a bit of lead on the half of a mildewed fly leaf torn

from the book:

Dear Alice-I am going away. When you read this think of me as hurrying through the wilderness to reach our army and bring it here. Be brave, as you always have been; be good, as you cannot help being; wait and waith for me; love me, as I love you. I will come. Do not doubt it. I will come, and I will crush Hamilton and his commissed. Courage, Alice dear; courage and wait for me. Paithfully ever.

She blased the paper with passionate from the book:

She kissed the paper with passionate fervor, pouring her tears upon it in April showers between which the light of her eyes played almost flercely, so polgnant was her sense of a despair which bordered open desperation "Gon gone!" It was all she could think or say. "Gone, gone!"

Jenn took the offending novel back home with him, hidden under his jerkin, but Beverley's note lay upon Allee's heart, a sweet comfort and a crushing weight, when an hour later Hamilton sent for her and she was

with fears and she moken prirring ontressed and disheveled, yet despite all this ber beauty asserted itself with subtle force,

Hamilton felt ashamed looking at her, but put on sternness and spoke without apparent sympathy:

"Miss Roussillon, you came near committing a great crime. As it is, you have done budly enough, but I wish not to be unreasonably severe. I hope you are sorry for your act and feel like doing better bereafter."

She was trembling, but her eyes looked steadily straight into his. They were eyes of baby innocence, yet they irradiated a strong womanly spirit just touched with the old perverse, mis-



She found the note and read it a dozen

chievous light which she could neither banish nor control. When she did not

make reply Hamilton continued: "You may go home now, and I shall expect to have no more trouble on your account," He made a gesture indicative of dismissal; then, as she turned from him, he added, somewhat raising

"And, further, Miss Roussillon, that flag you took from here must positively be returned. See that it is done."

She lifted her head high and walked away, not deligning to give him a word, "Humph! What do you think now of your fine young lady?" be demanded, turning to Helm with a sneering curl of his mouth. "She gives thanks coplously for a kindness, don't you

"Poor girl! She was scared nearly out of her life," said Helm. "She got away from you like a wounded birdfrom a snare. I never saw a face more pitiful than hers."

"Much pity she needs, and greatly like a wounded bird she acts, I must say, but good riddance if she'll keep her place hereafter. I despise myseif when I have to be hard with a woman. especially a pretty one. That girl's a saucy and fascinating minx and as langerous as twenty men. I'll keep a watch on her movements from this on. and if she gets into mischief again I'll transport her to Detroit or give her away to the Indians. She must stop her high handed foolishness."

Helm saw that Hamilton was talking mere wind, vox et præterea nihil, and he furthermore feit that his babbling signified no harm to Alice, but Hamilton surprised him presently by saying: "I have just learned that Lieutenant

Beverley is actually gone. Did you know of his departure?"

"What are you saying, sir?" Helm jumped to his feet, not angry. but excited.

"Keep cool. You need not answer if you prefer silence or evasion. You may want to go yourself soon."

Helm burst out laughing, but quickly growing serious said: 'Has Beverley been such a driveling

fool as that? Are you in earnest?" "He killed two of my acouts, wounded another and crossed the Wabash in their canoe. He is going straight toward Kaskaskia."

"The kilot! Hurrah for him! If you catch your hare you may roast him. but catch him first, governor!"

"You'll joke out of the other corner of your mouth, Captain Helm, if I find out that you gave him aid or countenance in breaking his parole."

"Ald or countenance! I never saw him after he walked out of this room. You gave him a mighty sight more aid and countenance than I did. What are you talking about! Broke his parole! He did no such thing. He returned it to you fairly, as you well know. He told you he was going."

"Well, I've sent twenty of my swiftest Indians after him to bring him back. I'll let you see him shot. That ought to please you."

"They'll never get him, governor. I'll bet high on him against your twenty scalp lifters any day. Fitzhugh Beverley is the best Indian fighter, Daniel Boone and Simon Kenton excepted, in the American colonies,"

On her way home Alice met Father Beret, who turned and walked beside her. He was so overjoyed at her release that he could scarcely speak, but held her hand and stroked it gently while she told him her story. It was beginning to rain, a steady, cold shower, when they reached the house, and for many days and nights thereafter the downfall continued almost inces-

auntly. "Dear child." said Father Beret, stopping at the gate and looking beseechingly into Alice's face, 'you must stay at home now-stay in the house. It will be horribly dangerous for you to pass about in the village after yourafter what has happened.'

"Do not fear, father; I will be careful. Aren't you coming in? I'll find you a cake and a glass of trine."

"No, child-not now." "Then goodby, goodby," she said. "Come soon; I shall be so lonesome."

On the veranda she suddenly stopped, running her fingers about her neck and into her bosom.

"Oh, father, Father Beret, I've lost my locket!" she cried. "See if I dropped it there."

She went back to the gate, searching the ground with her eyes. Of course she did not find her locket. It was miles and miles away, close to the heart of her lover. If she could but have known this it would have comforted her. Beverley had intended to leave it with Jean, but in his haste and excitement he forgot. Writing the note distracted his attention, and so he bore Alice's picture on his breast and in his heart while pursuing his long and perilous journey.

Four of Hamilton's scouts came upon Beverley twenty miles south of Vincennes, but having the advantage of them he killed two almost immediately and, after a running fight, the other two attempted escape in a canoe on the Wabash. Here, firing from a bluff, he wounded a third. Both then plunged headforemost into the water, and by keeping below the surface got away. The adventure gave Beverley new spirit and self reliance. He felt that he could accomplish anything necessary to his undertaking. In the captured pirogue he crossed the river, and, to make his trail hard to find, sent the little craft adrift down the current.

Then alone, in the dead of winter, he took his bearings and struck across the dreary, houseless plain toward St. Louis.

As soon as Hamilton's discomfited scouts reported to him he sent Long Hair, with twenty picked savages armed and supplied for continuous and rapid marching, in pursuit of Beverley. There was a large reward for bringing him in alive, a smaller one for his sealp.

When Alice beard of all this her buoyant and happy nature seemed entirely to desert her for a time. She was proud to find out that Beverley had shown himself brave and capableit touched her love of herolam-but she knew too much about Indian warfare to hope that he could hold his own against Long Hair, the willest and boldest of scalp hunters, and twenty of the most experienced braves in Hamilton's forces. He would almost certainly be killed and scalped or captured and brought back to be shot or hanged in Vincennes. The thought chilled and curdled her blood.

Both Heim and Father Beret tried to encourage and comfort her by representing the probabilities in the fairest light.

"It's like hunting for a needle in a haystack, going out to find a man in that wilderness," said Helm, with optimistic cheerfulness, "and, besides, Beverley is no easy dose for twenty red niggers to take. I've seen him tried at worse odds than that, and he got out with a whole skin too. Don't you fret about him, Miss Roussillon."

Little belp came to her from attempts of this sort. She might brighten up for awhile, but the dark dread and the terrible gnawing at her heart, the sinking and despairing in her soul, could not be cured.

What added immeasureably to her distress was the attention of Farusworth, whose wound troubled him but a short time. He seemed to have had a revelation and a change of spirit since the unfortunate rencounter and the subsequent nursing at Alico's hands. He was grave, earnest, kindly,

evidently striving to play a gentle and honorable part. She would feel that he carried a load of regret, that he wanted to pay a full price in good for the evil that he had done. His sturdy English beart was righting itself nobly, yet she but half understood him until his actions and words began to betray his love, and then she hated him unreason-Realizing this, Farnsworth bore himself more like a faithful dog than In the manner hitherto habitual to him. He simply shadowed Alice and would not be rebuffed. Never was a good soldier-for he was that from head to foot -more levelorn and leve decile. The maiden had completely subdued the

man. About this time, deep in a rainy and pitch black night, Gaspard Roussillon came home. He tapped on the door again and again. Alice heard, but she hesitated to speak or move. Was she growing cowardly? Her heart bent like a drum. There was but one person in all the world that she could think of; it was not M. Roussillon. Ah, no; she had well nigh forgotten her gigantic foster father.

"It is I, ma cherie; it is Gaspard, my love. Open the door," came in a boom ing half whisper from without, "Alice, Jean, it is your Papa Roussillon, my dears. Let me in."

Alice was at the door in a minute, unbarring it. M. Roussillon entered. armed to the teeth, the water dribbling from his buckskin clothes.
"Pouf!" he exclaimed. "My throat is

like dust." His thoughts were diving into the stores under the floor. "I am famished. Dear children, dear little ones! They are glad to see papa! Where is your mamma?" He had Alice in his arms and Jean

clung to his legs. Mme. Roussillon, to be sure of no mistake, lighted a lamp with a brand that smoldered on the hearth and held it up; then, satisfied as to her husband's identity, set it on a shelf and flung herself into the affectionate group with clumsy abandon. making a great noise.

"Oh, my dear Gaspard?" she cried as she lunged forward. "Gaspard, Gaspard!" Her voice fairly lifted the roof. her great weight, buried with such force, overturned everybody, and all of and solid dame sitting on top.

puffed M. Höussigion, greening at from her unpleasant pressure and scrambling to his feet, "Really you must have fared well in my absence, madame; you are much benylor." He laughed and lifted her up as if she had been a child, kissing her resonantly,

His gun had fallen with a great clatter. He took it from the floor and examined it to see if it had been injured. then set it in a corner.

"I am afraid we have been mak ng too much noise," said Alice, speaking very low. "There is a patrol guard every night n.w. If they should hear You"-"Shi" whispered M. Roussillon. "We

will be very still. Allee, is there some thing to eat and a drop of wine handy? I have come many miles. I am tired. hungry, thiraty-kill?"

Alfee brought some cold roast venison, a loaf and a bottle of claret. These she set before him on a little table.

"Ah, this is conifort," he said after he had guiped a full cup. "Have you

Then he began to tell where he had been, what he had seen and the many things be had done. A Frenchman must babble while he eats and drinks. A little wine makes him eloquent. He talks with his hands, shoulders, eyes. Mme. Ronssilion. Alice and Jenn, wrapped in furs, huddled around him to hear. He was very cutertaining, and they forget the patrol until a noise startled them. It was the low of a cow. They laughed and the hissier of the house softened his voice:

M. Roussillon had been the guest of a reat Indian chleftain who was called the Gate of the Wabash because he controlled the river. The chief was an old acquaintance and treated him well. "But I wanted to see you all," Gaspard said. "I was afraid something might have happened to you, so I came back just to peep in. I can't stay, of course. Hamilton would kill me as if I were a wolf. I can remain but an hour and then slip out of town again before daylight comes. The rain and darkness are my friends."

He had seen Simon Kenton, who said he had been in the neighborhood of Vincennes acting as a scout and spy for Clark. Precently and quite casually be added:

"And I saw Lieutenant/Beverley too. I suppose you know that he has escaped from Hamilton, and"- Here a big mouthful of venison interfered. Alice leaned toward blm white and breathless, ber heart standing still.

Then the door, which had been left unbarred, was flung open, and along with a great rush of wind and rain the patrol guard, five in number, sprang in. M. Roussillon reached his gun with one hand, with the other swung a tre-

mendous blow as he leaped against the intruders. Mme. Roussillon blew out the light. No cave in the depth of earth was ever darker than that room. The patrolmen could not see one another or know what to do, but M. Houssillon laid about him with the strength of a giant. His blows sounded as if they smashed bones. Men fell benyily thumping on the floor where he rushed zlong. Some one fired a pistol, and by its flash they all saw him, but instantly the darkness closed again, and before they could get their bearings he was out and gone, his great bulking form making its way easily over familiar ground where his would be enptors could have proceeded but slowly even with a light to guide them.

There was furious cursing among the patrolmen as they tumbled about ness and confusion. At last one of them with which the night guards were furgave forth a pale red light that danced

weirdly on the floors and walls.

Alice had snatched down one of her repiers when the guards first entered. They now saw her facing them with ure it should be her slender blade leveled, her back to the wall, her eyes shining dangerously. Mme. Roussilion had fled into the adjoining room. Jean had also disap-The officer, a subaltern in charge of the guard, seeing Alice and not quickly able to make out that it was a woman thus defying him, crossed swords with her. There was small space for action. Moreover, the officer. being not in the least a swordsman, played awkwardly, and quick as flash his point was down. The rapler entered just below his throat with a dull, chucking stab. He leaped back



A pair of arms chaped his legs.

ward, feeling at the same time a pair of arms chap his legs. It was Jean. and the Heutenant, thus unexpectedly them tumbled in a heap, the rotund tangled, fell to the floor, breaking, but not extinguishing, the guard's lantern U. "Ouf! Not so impetuous, my deer," as he went down. The little remaining

off spread and damed up outmores . .. if eager for conflagration, sputtering along the uneven boards.

"Kill that impl" cried the Boutagant in a strangling voice while trying to regain his feet. "Shoot! Bayonet?" In his pain, rage and haste he inad-

vertently set his hand in the midst of the blazing oil, which clung to the flesh with a seething grip.
"Thunder!" be screamed.

Two or three bayonets were leveled upon Alice. Some one kicked Jean clean across the coom, and he lay there, curied up in his bairy night wrap, looking like an enormous porcupine.

At this point a new performer came upon the stage, a dark robed thing so active that its outlines changed elusively, giving it no recognizable fea-It might have been Satan himself or some terrible unknown wild animal clad somewhat to resemble a man, so far as the startled guards could make out. It clawed right and left, hurled one of them against the wall, dashed another through the door into Mme, Roussillon's room, where the good woman was wailing at the top of her voice, and felled a third with a stroke like that of a bear's paw.

Consternation was at high tide when Parnsworth, who always slept with an ear open, reached Roussillon place and quickly quieted things. He was troubled beyond expression when he found out the true state of the affair, for there was nothing that he could do but arrest Alice and take her to Hamilton. It made his heart sink. He would have thought little of ordering a file of coldiers to shoot a man under the same conditions, but to subject her again to the governor's stern cruelty-how could he do it? This time there would be no

hope for her. Alice stood before him flushed, disheveled, defiant, sword in hand, beautiful and terrible as an angel. The black figure, man or devil, had disappeared as strangely as it had come. The sublicutenant was having his slight wound bandaged. Mon were raging and cursing under their breath.

rubbing their bruised heads and limbs. "Alice-Mile, Roussillon, I am so sorry for this," said Captain Farasworth. 'It is painful, terrible"

He could not go on, but stood before

her unmanned. In the feeble light his

face was wan, and his burt shoulder, still in bandages, drooped perceptibly. "I surrender to you," she presently said in French, extending the hilt of her rapier to him. "I had to defend myself when attacked by your lieutenant there. If an officer finds it necessary to set upon a girl with his sward.

may not the girl guard her life if she can? She was short of breath, so that her voice palpitated with a touching plan-

gency that shook the man's beart Farnsworth accepted the sword. He could do nothing less. His duty admitted of no doubtful consideration, yet he healthted, feeling around in his mind for a phrase with which to evade the

inevitable. "It will be safer for you at the fort, mademoiselle. Let me take you there." (To be Continued.)

The Christmas Dinner.

In spite of the fact that the word dyspepsia means literally bad cook, it will not be fair for many to iny the blame on the cook if they begin the Christmas dinner with little apb dilw it bno bna oits in the room, the unburt ones trampling nausea. It may be not fair for any their prostrate companions and strik to do that-let us hope so for the ing wildly at each other in their blind sake of the cook! The discase dyspepsia indicates a bad stomach, that bethought him to open a dark lanters is a weak stomach, rather than a bad cook, and for a weak atomach there nished. Its flame was fluttering and is nothing olse equal to-Hood's Sarsaparilla. It gives the stomach vigor and tone, cures dyapepela, creates appetite, and makes cating the pleas



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